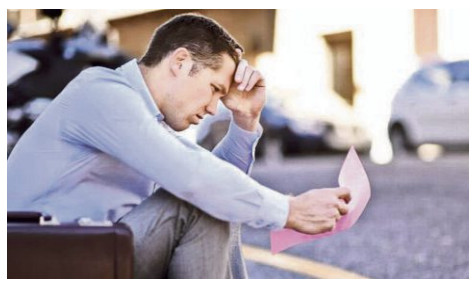
LOCAL & STATE, 3A

Archdiocese of Miami suspends holding Mass and other events



LOCAL & STATE, 5A

There are resources to help South Floridians hit by virus fallout

VOLUME 117, No. 187
STAY CONNECTED MIAMIHERALD.COM

FACEBOOK.COM/MIAMIHERALD
TWITTER.COM/MIAMIHERALD

WINNER OF 22 PULITZER PRIZES

THURSDAY MARCH 19 2020

$2.50

Partly sunny 84°/74° See 24A

Miami Herald

MATIAS J. OCNER mocner@miamiherald.com

A FoundCare staff member administers a test in West Palm Beach on Tuesday. While the level of risk among healthcare workers is high, there is no reliable data available about how many U.S. providers have COVID-19.

Miami healthcare workers worry about coronavirus risks

■ Doctors and nurses at Miami's Jackson Health System and other hospitals say caring for infectious people during the novel coronavirus pandemic is causing them to worry about risks of exposure.

BY DANIEL CHANG AND BEN CONARCK
dchang@miamiherald.com
bconarck@miamiherald.com

In South Florida's hospitals and medical centers, doctors and nurses accustomed to working under pressure are dealing with a new reality: a novel pathogen that they know little about and has spread across the world with alarming intensity.

At Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami-Dade's public hospital and the largest medical center in the state, some healthcare workers have likened the novel coronavirus outbreak to the HIV epidemic of the 1980s, which was then an unknown virus filling hospital emergency rooms with seriously ill patients — with little understood about how it was spreading.

"I can remember going into a room with no gloves," said June Ellis, associate chief nursing officer for Jackson Memorial. "Was I nervous at that time? Yeah, I was nervous. I was nervous of the unknown. Then you

SEE HEALTH WORKERS, 2A

Trump invokes special powers to strengthen fight against virus

■ President Donald Trump invoked the Defense Production Act of 1950 to steer industrial output to overcome shortages of face masks, ventilators, and other supplies as hospitals brace for an expected onslaught of cases.

BY TIM SULLIVAN AND DAVID RISING
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS

President Donald Trump on Wednesday invoked emergency authority to marshal industry to fight the new coronavirus as the economic fallout mounted with word that nearly the entire U.S. auto industry is shutting down its North American factories to protect workers.

On a day of head-spinning developments:

- Stocks tumbled again on Wall Street on fears of a prolonged recession, falling so fast they triggered another automatic trading halt. The Dow Jones Industrial Average shed more than 1,300 points (more than 6%) and has lost nearly all of the big gains that it had posted since Trump's inauguration. Oil dropped below $21 per barrel for the first time since 2002.
- More borders slammed shut across Europe and North Amer-

SEE TRUMP, 2A

Virus strikes congressman and VA in South Florida

■ The number of confirmed cases in Florida spiked, a patient at Miami's VA Medical Center tested positive, and a Miami representative became the first member of Congress to contract the new coronavirus.

BY AARON LEIBOWITZ
aleibowitz@miamiherald.com

The potential for the novel coronavirus to ravage South Florida became more clear Wednesday as the number of confirmed cases spiked, a patient at Miami's VA Medical Center tested positive, and a local official became the first member of Congress to learn he contracted the virus.

Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart

After the number of positive cases of COVID-19 jumped from 216 to 328 statewide from Tuesday to Wednesday, including from 44 to 77 in Miami-Dade County, Republican Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart of Miami announced he had tested positive.

Diaz-Balart, 58, entered self-quarantine Friday and stayed in Washington because his wife has a pre-existing medical condition,

SEE CASES, 7A

More inside

Dade adding 'non-essential' retail to closures, **4A**

Layoffs hit Miami restaurants, **6A**

ICE will temporarily stop enforcement actions, **8A**

Stocks tumble and investors dash for cash amid recession fears, **20A**

Most S. Florida malls closing, **20A**

Miami-Dade hotel occupancy dropped from 90% to 20%

■ The South Florida hotel industry is grappling with a wave of cancellations due to the coronavirus-related travel restrictions. Occupancy dropped from 90% to 20% in the past week.

BY MICHELLE KAUFMAN AND ROB WILE
mkaufman@miamiherald.com
rwile@miamiherald.com

Just last month, South Florida hotels were packed with Super Bowl visitors. Last week, hotel lobbies and pool areas up and down the coast were bustling with sunscreen-lathered spring breakers, vacationing families, and convention-goers.

That was before COVID-19 was declared a national emergency.

Just days later, on Wednesday, the glittering lobby lounge at the St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort was almost entirely empty. Breakfast was being served on request — either through room service, or, in the 21st century way, through curbside pickup from a delivery app.

The tourism industry worldwide is struggling to deal with an avalanche of cancellations as the coronavirus-related travel restrictions and social-distancing efforts expand day by day. Miami-Dade County has been

SEE HOTELS, 7A

THE MIAMI HERALD

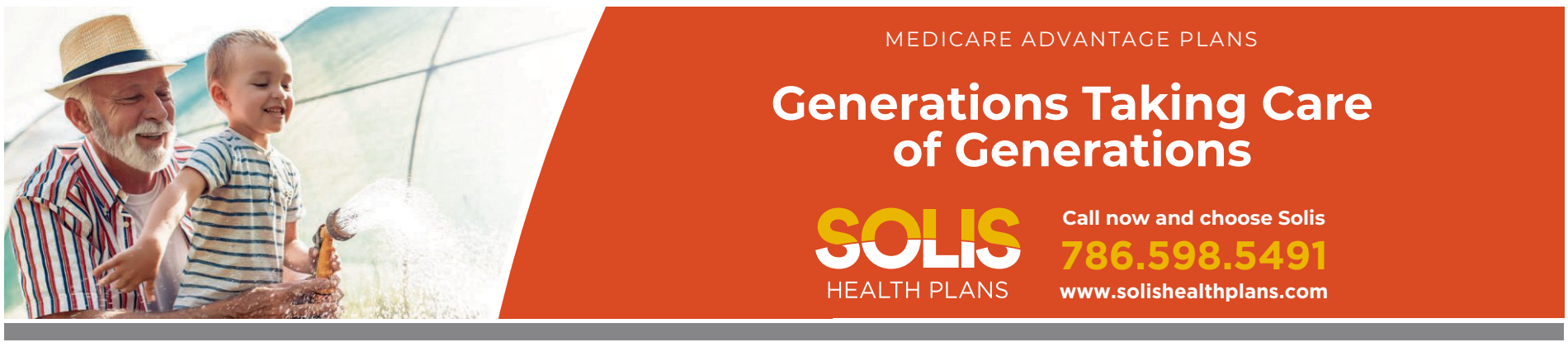
DIGITAL SATURDAYS CHANGE STARTS THIS WEEK

Starting Saturday, we will launch a new weekend package with expanded newspapers on Fridays and Sundays and access to the Saturday edition exclusively online. While we will no longer produce a printed newspaper on Saturday, we will continue to publish the strong independent local journalism that you expect from the Miami Herald online seven days a week.

If you haven't already done so, please activate your digital subscription and never miss a breaking story. The eEdition is a digital replica of the printed edition and is ready to read by 6 a.m. and often earlier. To learn more about the eEdition, visit miamiherald.com/eedition. Also included are our mobile and tablet apps, newsletters, and more. To start reading the eEdition now, log on to miamiherald.com/activate and follow the easy steps. Speaking of newsletters, we're adding a Saturday morning newsletter, starting this week.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns related to the new delivery method, please give us a call at 800-843-4372 or email us at customerservice@miamiherald.com. We will do everything possible to ensure your satisfaction.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

To subscribe or report delivery issues,
800-843-4372 or miamiherald.com/customer-service

Business	20A	Deaths	10A	Music review	3G
Classified	22-23A	Local news	10A	Puzzles	10-11G
Comics	12-13G	Lottery	8A	Television	14G